

Francis Preston Blair to Andrew Jackson, October 13, 1837, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

FRANCIS P. BLAIR TO JACKSON.

Washington, October 13, 1837.

My Dear General: I received your letter of the 27 Sept. to day. It was but a few days ago that I told some of our friends, you knew more of our affair at the Hermitage, than we did in Washington. Your review of men and things confirms the observation.

The friends of the administration in the House, are laboring with all zeal to keep the sneaking and dodging Bank Democrats to their posts to night, (it is now 9 O clock) that they may get the *Divorce Bill* 1 out of the Committee of the whole. I am apprehensive that treachery is too much extended, to compass it. The Conservatives are every moment dodging off into a committee room where it is said, Rives and Talmadge have a little *Conservatory* and ply them with all sorts of good words and winning ways, to induce them to lay the Bill over to the next session. This is the effort now because popular Sentiment has been brought to bear so strongly upon the renegades who went in so boldly with them at first, that they perceive they dare not trust them on Yeas and nays at the present moment. The two Senators hope something from time and a new impetus from the Banks. possibly they think, that a new panic may help them in their desperation, and this the Federal and Biddle men will assist in raising. The fact is clear that Calhoun's course in refusing to act with the party to which Rives with his little Junto looked to carry his measure, as he did his Printer, has thrown them all aback. Rives now finds that he must either join the Federal Bank party and take chances with the soldiers in their ranks, or fall in at the rear of those whom he has deserted. It is an awful alternative, and I think he

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will rather keep on the outskirts of our Army, for a while, but will go over to the enemy whenever a general action takes place and abandon the Republicans forever. He will certainly exert himself to take Virginia from Mr. Van Buren in the next Election. If he shall find this altogether hopeless, by the stern stand of the Republicans of the State, and especially in the next Legislature, he will probably keep on his mask, until some other opportunity to betray his party shall occur, but that he will betray it at some time, is to my mind certain. There is treachery in the man, and as you truly say, it has been brooding in him for more than a year past. I think it dates back to his disappointment in regard to the nomination for the Vice Presidency. I shall mind your hint about Cataline. He may be trusted, as you trusted the Pirates at New Orleans. They were good soldiers, in a good cause, their selfish feelings, pride, ambition, the hope of exchanging a bad, for an honorable notoriety, all conspired to make them distinguish their zeal and ability in battling for the country. But a truce to politics, of which you know more than I do, although in the midst. . . .

1 The bill divorcing the Treasury from banks and setting up an independent treasury system.